

Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Final Office Action mailed December 28, 2007.

I. Summary of Examiner's Rejections

Prior to the Final Office Action mailed December 28, 2007, Claims 1-9 and 21-31 were pending in the application. In the Final Office Action, Claims 1-9 and 21-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 1-2, 5, 7-8, and 21-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Brownlie et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,202,157, hereinafter Brownlie) in view of Donohue (U.S. Patent No. 6,199,204, hereinafter Donohue), and further in view of Wu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,774,551, hereinafter Wu) or Al-Salqan et al. (U.S. Patent 6,687,823, hereinafter Al-Salqan). Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brownlie in view of Donohue and Wu or alternatively Al-Salqan and further in view of Wang (U.S. Patent No. 5,956,521, hereinafter Wang). Claims 3-4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brownlie in view of Donohue and Wu or alternatively Al-Salqan, and further in view of Trcka et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0039579, hereinafter Trcka) and Microsoft Press (Computer Dictionary, 3rd Edition, ISBN:157231446XA, 1997, hereinafter Microsoft).

II. Summary of Applicant's Amendment

The present Response amends Claims 1, 7, 21, 26, 30 and 31, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration Claims 1-9 and 21-31. Reconsideration of the Application, as amended, is respectfully requested. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, Claims 1-9 and 21-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. More specifically, the limitation "each separate application in the system being guarded by a different copy of the access authorization service such that separate applications in the system do not share authorization services" was rejected as not having been disclosed in the original specification.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. As previously amended in the Amendment filed December 3, 2007, the Specification specifically discloses that "each application being

protected is associated with its own copy of the access authorization service” and “the applications do not share authorization services” (Specification, paragraph [0087]). Applicant has amended Claims 1, 7, 21, 26, 30 and 31 so as to more closely follow the language used therein. Accordingly, as amended, Claims 1-9 and 21-31 are fully supported by the Specification as originally filed and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

IV. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Final Office Action, Claims 1-2, 5, 7-8, and 21-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Brownlie et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,202,157, hereinafter Brownlie) in view of Donohue (U.S. Patent No. 6,199,204, hereinafter Donohue), and further in view of Wu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,774,551, hereinafter Wu) or Al-Salqan et al. (U.S. Patent 6,687,823, hereinafter Al-Salqan). Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brownlie in view of Donohue and Wu or alternatively Al-Salqan and further in view of Wang (U.S. Patent No. 5,956,521, hereinafter Wang). Claims 3-4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brownlie in view of Donohue and Wu or alternatively Al-Salqan, and further in view of Trcka et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0039579, hereinafter Trcka) and Microsoft Press (Computer Dictionary, 3rd Edition, ISBN:157231446XA, 1997, hereinafter Microsoft).

Al-Salqan et al. reference does not qualify as Prior Art

Al-Salqan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,687,823, hereafter Al-Salqan) was used in combination with several other references to reject the claims of the present application. The effective prior art date of Al-Salqan appears to be May 5, 1999. However, the present Application is a continuation of U.S. Application No. 09/248,788 (now U.S. Patent 6,158,010), which was filed on February 12, 1999. Claims 1-9 and 21-31 are fully supported by the parent Application 09/248,788. Accordingly, because the priority date of the present Application pre-dates the effective prior art date of the Al-Salqan reference, Applicant respectfully submits that the Al-Salqan reference is not proper prior art against the present Application and requests withdrawal of any rejections based thereon.

In addition, the present Application also claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/105,963, which was filed October 28, 1998, and which also pre-dates the effective prior art date of the Al-Salqan reference. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is requested.

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended for purposes of clarity. As amended, Claim 1 currently defines:

1. *A system for maintaining security in a distributed computing environment, comprising:*
 - (1) a policy manager, coupled to a network, including a database for storing a security policy including a plurality of rules that control user access to applications; and a policy distributor, coupled to the database, for distributing the plurality of rules through the network;*
 - (2) a security engine located on a client coupled to the network and stored on a computer readable storage medium, said security engine storing a set of the plurality of rules constituting a local customized security policy received through the network from the policy distributor, and enforcing the local customized security policy with respect to an application at the client wherein enforcing the local customized security policy includes evaluating an access request by matching it to one or more of the plurality of rules of the local customized security policy and granting or denying access to the application based on the evaluation; and*
 - (3) the application, coupled to the security engine, wherein the security engine guards access to the particular application to which said security engine is coupled, each separate application in the system being guarded by its own different copy of access authorization service such that separate applications do not share authorization services; and**wherein the security policy is updated by recording a series of incremental changes to the security policy, determining which of said incremental changes are applicable to said security engine, computing an accumulated delta that reflects the series of incremental changes applicable to said security engine and sending the accumulated delta to the security engine from the policy manager such that the security engine uses the accumulated delta to update the local customized security policy.*

As amended, Claim 1 defines an application that is coupled to a security engine such that the security engine guards access to the particular application to which it is coupled. In this way, each separate application in the system is guarded by its own different copy of the authorization service based on a centrally distributed security policy. Since the applications do not share authorization services, the access requests can be evaluated based on different custom policies for each application. At the same time, these policies are distributed from a central source, which allows the management of all these custom policies and authorization services.

Applicants respectfully submit that these features are not disclosed nor rendered obvious by Brownlie in combination with Donohue and further in combination with Wu (the cited references).

In the Office Action, Wu was cited as disclosing “a system with modular (pluggable) design wherein a different copy of access authorization service guards separate applications (Fig. 1, 3 and 5 and associated text)” (Office Action page 7). Applicant respectfully disagrees. Wu describes a pluggable system that includes multiple authentication modules, however this is different from the features defined in Claim 1. Authentication modules described in Wu are merely a way for a user to log into the system using different methods. For example, when the user attempts to log in, the system determines which authentication service to use and then uses that particular type of service to log in the user (Wu, col. 6, lines 35-50). There is no disclosure in Wu of each application controlling transactional access to its various components by using its own different copy of the authorization service so that applications do not share the authorization services, as defined in Claim 1. This feature of Claim 1 allows access to each separate application to be guarded by a different security engine based on a centrally distributed but locally customized security policy. No such functionality is described in Wu.

Another point of distinction is that in Claim 1, different access *authorization* services are defined, not *authentication* of users, as disclosed in Wu. This is significant because access authorization services control transactional access to applications (e.g. for each access request, transaction, etc.), and not merely allow a user authenticate himself (log in) to the system as described in Wu. Furthermore, there is no disclosure in Wu of separate applications having their own copies of authorization services, such that they do not share the services. Thus, a different authorization service at each application that controls access to that application is not the same as multiple authentication modules described in Wu.

Furthermore, in the Office Action, Donohue was cited as disclosing the feature of updating changes of Claim 1. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Donohue teaches the distribution of software updates and patches. More specifically, Donohue provides an updater agent which is associated with a computer program and which accesses relevant network locations and downloads any available updates to that program (Donohue, Abstract). This is different from the features of Claim 1, as amended. For example, Donohue does not disclose any recording or keeping track of incremental changes to a security policy. More specifically, there is no disclosure of determining *which of those incremental changes are relevant* to each security engine and *computing an accumulated delta that reflects only those changes that are applicable* to each different security engine, as defined in Claim 1.

In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1, as amended, is neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 7, 21, 26, 30 and 31

Claims 7, 21, 26, 30 and 31, while independently patentable, recite limitations that similarly to Claim 1 are not disclosed nor rendered obvious by the cited references. Reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-6, 8-9, 22-25 and 27-29

Claims 2-6, 8-9, 22-25 and 27-29 are not addressed separately, but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim, and further in view of the comments provided above.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: /Justas Geringson/
Justas Geringson
Reg. No. 57,033

Customer No.: 23910
FLIESLER MEYER LLP
650 California Street, 14th Floor
San Francisco, California 94108
Telephone: (415) 362-3800
Fax: (415) 362-2928